1   It is also to be understood that the following claims are to cover all generic

2   and specific features of the invention described herein, and all statements of the

3   scope of the invention which, as a matter of language, might be said to fall there

4   between.

5

6   Having described the invention, what is claimed as new and secured by

7   Letters Patent is:

8

1   1.   A method of packaging a digital creative work, comprising the steps

2   of: encapsulating the work within a data container; encapsulating metadata

3   within the container; and integrating, with the container, means for accessing

4   the work and the metadata.

5

6   2.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of integrating means

7   for accessing the work further comprises the step of integrating, with the

8   container, means for rendering the work.

9

10   3.   A method according to claim 2, wherein the step of integrating means

11   for rendering the work further comprises the step of integrating, with the

12   container, means for printing the work.

13

14   4.   A method according to claim 2, wherein the step of integrating means

15   for rendering the work further comprises the step of integrating, with the

16   container, means for copying the work.

17

18   5.   A method according to claim 2, wherein the step of integrating means

19   for rendering the work further comprises the step of integrating, with the

20   container, means for viewing the work.

21

22   6.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of integrating means

23   for accessing the work further comprises the step of integrating, with the

24   container, means for controlling use of the work.

25

26   7.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of integrating means

27   for accessing the work further comprises the step of integrating, with the

28   container, means for limiting use of the work.

94

8. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of integrating means for accessing the work further comprises the step of integrating, with the container, means for disallowing use of the work.

9. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of integrating means for accessing the work and the metadata further comprises the step of integrating, with the container, means for operating on the metadata.

10. A method according to claim 9, wherein the step of integrating means for operating on the metadata further comprises integrating, with the container, means for providing email to one or more external addresses.

11. A method according to claim 9, wherein the step of integrating means for operating on the metadata further comprises integrating, with the container, means for providing web access to one or more WWW addresses.

12. A method according to claim 9, wherein the step of integrating means for operating on the metadata further comprises integrating, with the container, means for providing interactive licensing to the work.

13. A method according to claim 9, wherein the step of integrating means for operating on the metadata further comprises integrating, with the container, means for providing a link to a digital contract for the work.

14. A method according to claim 9, wherein the step of integrating means for operating on the metadata further comprises integrating, with the container, means for displaying descriptive information.

15.   A method according to claim 14, wherein the descriptive information comprises one or more of the following: authorship information, historical information, ownership information, date information, time information, and bibliographic information.

16.   A method according to claim 14, wherein the descriptive information comprises a digital signature to verify authenticy of the work.

17.   A method according to claim 9, wherein the step of integrating means for operating on the metadata further comprises integrating, with the container, means for updating the metadata.

18.   A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of forming the data container as a plurality of associated data that are distributed across one or more of the following: a computer network, an Internet, a LAN, a WAN, an on-line service, and an Intranet.

19.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the work is selected from the group of digital images and graphics, digital photos, digital audio, digital video, digital music sequences, word processing files, spreadsheet files, and mixtures thereof.

20.   A method according to claim 19 wherein the digital images and graphics are selected from the group of JPEG, GIF, BMP, TIFF and mixtures thereof.

1 21.   A method according to claim 19 wherein the digital audio is selected

2 from the group of WAV, SND, AIFF, AU and mixtures thereof.

3

4 22.   A method according to claim 19 wherein the digital music sequence

5 comprises MIDI.

6

7 23.   A method according to claim 19 wherein the digital video is selected

8 from the group of AVI, MOV, MPEG and mixtures thereof.

9

10 24.   A method according to claim 19 wherein the word processing files are

11 selected from the group of files created through Microsoft Word™, Novell

12 WordPerfect™ and mixtures thereof.

13

14 25.   A method according to claim 19 wherein the spreadsheet files

15 comprise files created through Microsoft Excel™.

16

17 26.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

18 metadata further comprises the step of encapsulating copyright management

19 information.

20

21 27.   A method according to claim 26, wherein the copyright management

22 information comprises any of ownership identification information,

23 ownership contact information, rights administration information, rights

24 administration contact information, creatorship information, authorship

25 information, creator contact information, author contact information, listings

26 of antecedent object information, listings of related object information,

27 licensing terms, licensing conditions, publisher information, and ownership

28 credits.

1

2   28.   A method according to claim 27, wherein any of the ownership contact

3   information, rights administration contact information, creator contact

4   information, author contact information comprise email addresses, web

5   access adresses, and mixtures thereof.

6

7   29.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

8   metadata further comprises the step of encapsulating registration data, the

9   registration data identifying an associated registration server capable of

10   administrating the data container.

11

12   30.   A method according to claim 29, wherein the metadata is modifiable

13   and accessible through on-line communication with the registration server.

14

15   31.   A method according to claim 30, further comprising the step of storing

16   at least part of the metadata at a database of the registration server.

17

18   32.   A method according to claim 30, further comprising the step of down-

19   loading at least part of the metadata from the registration server.

20

21   33.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of integrating means

22   for accessing the metadata comprises providing a user interface to the data

23   container to review at least part of the metadata on a computer.

24

25   34.   A method according to claim 33, wherein the the user interface is

26   displayable on the computer and is selectable by a user of the computer to

27   modify information therein.

28

1   35.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

2   metadata further comprises the step of encapsulating, with the data

3   container, minimum permissions data, the minimum permissions data

4   specifying one or more operations that can be performed on the work without

5   a license to the work.

6

7   36.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

8   metadata further comprises the step of encapsulating, with the data

9   container, minimum permissions data, the minimum permissions data

10   specifying a default contract to the work, the default contract specifying a

11   minimum set of operations that can be performed by applications on the

12   work.

13

14   37.   A method according to claim 35 or 36, wherein the operations are

15   selected from the group of drag and drop operations, printing operations,

16   editing operarations, activating operations, saving operations, and viewing

17   operations.

18

19   38.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of integrating means

20   for accessing the work and the metadata further comprises the step of

21   integrating, with the container, one or more of the following: means for

22   encoding the metadata, means for compressing the metadata, means for

23   manipulating the metadata, means for encrypting the metadata, means for

24   decoding the metadata, and means for decrypting the metadata.

25

26   39.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of integrating means

27   for accessing the work and the metadata further comprises the step of

28   integrating, with the container, one or more of the following: means for

99

1 encoding the work, means for compressing the work, means for manipulating

2 the work, means for encrypting the work, means for decoding the work, and

3 means for decrypting the work.

4

5 40.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating the

6 work further comprises the step of encrypting the work.

7

8 41.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

9 metadata further comprises the step of associating a metadata template with

10 the container, the metadata template describing registration with a

11 registration server.

12

13 42.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

14 metadata further comprises the step of associating a metadata template with

15 the container, the metadata template specifying properties of the container

16 used to register the container with a registration server.

17

18 43.   A method according to claim 42, wherein the step of encapsulating

19 metadata further comprises specifying, within the template, a display

20 interface used to view the properties.

21

22 44.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

23 metadata further comprises the step of associating a metadata template with

24 the container, the metadata template identifying user-selectable optional

25 properties of the container.

26

27 45.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

28 metadata further comprises the step of associating a metadata template with

1 the container, the metadata template specifying requirements and rules

2 associated with the work.

3

4 46. A method according to claim 41, 44 or 45, further comprising the step

5 of providing, with the metadata template, a user interface suitable for

6 viewing information related to the metadata and the work.

7

8 47. A method according to claim 41, 42, 44 or 45, further comprising the

9 step of providing different metadata templates corresponding to different

10 types of works.

11

12 48. A method according to claim 41, 42, 44 or 45, further comprising the

13 step of providing different metadata templates corresponding to different

14 licensing models.

15

16 49. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

17 metadata further comprises the step of associating, with the container,

18 operations that can be performed on the work.

19

20 50. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of

21 registering the document with one or more registration servers, each

22 registration server providing on-line administration of the container and

23 having user-selectable registration templates for associating metadata with

24 the container, at least part of the metadata being modifiable over a lifetime of

25 the container.

26

1   51.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

2   metadata further comprises the step of associating, with the container,

3   requirements of specific parties having rights in or to the work.

4

5   52.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the requirements comprise a

6   requirement to obtain a license to the work prior to additional use of the

7   work.

8

9   53.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the requirements comprise a

10   requirement of obtaining information about entities desiring access to the

11   work.

12

13   54.   A method according to claim 53, wherein the information comprises

14   address and billing information of the entities.

15

16   55.   A method according to claim 53, wherein the entities comprise one or

17   more of an individual, a partnership, a company, a government agency, and

18   an educational institution.

19

20   56.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of encapsulating

21   metadata further comprises the step of encapsulating information indicative

22   of one or both of an owner and creator of the media, and further comprising

23   the step of communicating with one or both of the owner and creator through

24   one or both of email and web page access.

25

26   57.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the steps of encapsulating are

27   made through object-based technology.

28

1   58.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the container comprises
2   object-based technology.

3

4   59.   A method according to claim 57 or 58, wherein the object-based
5   technology comprises one or more of OLE™, ActiveX™, OpenDoc™,
6   and hybrid OLE™/OpenDoc™.